

(Washington, DC) Today, Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) made the following statement on the one year anniversary of the explosion of the *Deepwater Horizon* oil rig, which led to the BP oil spill and an environmental catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico:

"Of the most recent disasters we have witnessed, many were thought impossible right up until the moment they happened. It never occurred to most Americans that a hurricane would overwhelm a levy and partially destroy an American city. It was likewise common knowledge that nuclear reactors in Japan could withstand the consequences of the strongest earthquake. And no one thought an explosion on an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico would kill eleven men and pour 200 million gallons of oil into the water one year ago today. It is often what is not accounted for that transforms an incident from relatively minor to tragic. With the resumption of offshore drilling and exploration, we once again hear choruses that the BP oil spill was an anomaly and couldn't happen again. This rationale is unsatisfactory.

"There is only one way to ensure that there is never another spill and that is to stop drilling offshore once and for all. We need to break our dependence on fossil fuels and develop a 21st century renewable, green energy plan. Our current energy policies must be changed. We have a responsibility to ourselves and future generations to do so."

Congressman Alcee L. Hastings serves as Senior Member of the House Rules Committee, Ranking Democratic Member of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, and Democratic Chairman of the Florida Delegation.

###